

**Title of Research** “Investigating Health Care Utilization Among Low-Income Adults in Duluth, Minnesota”

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**Abstract**

**Objective or Hypothesis :** The University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth and College of Pharmacy jointly support the HOPE Clinic, a student run free clinic with faculty supervision. The HOPE Clinic is located in the CHUM drop-in center in downtown Duluth. The student board of directors wanted to gain research information on the health care access patterns of low income individuals in Duluth to provide better care for the patients that the HOPE Clinic serves, and to have a better understanding of the challenges that those individuals faced in accessing appropriate health care. Our objective was to investigate this population’s priorities in terms of their care, including convenience, cost, service providers, and insurance. Questions that were studied through the course of this research included: 1) What types of health services are uninsured, underinsured and low-income adults in the Duluth area utilizing? 2) What is the level of awareness among this patient population of existing services geared towards this population? 3) What are some of the reasons for current service utilization choices?

**Population** Low-income, homeless or un-insured persons living in Duluth, MN.

**Methods :** 35 Low-income adults, aged 18 and up, currently living in the Duluth area were recruited through local social service agencies and completed an interviewer-administered paper-and-pencil survey. The surveys were composed of 31 questions, and most of the questions were quantitative, with multiple choice responses and qualitative follow-up questions.

**Main Results** Data collection is complete and results are in the process of being analyzed, however as of the deadline they are not yet available. An analysis of the results and subsequent conclusions will be completed by January 30th. By the time of the MAFP conference, we will be able to present a comprehensive review of our results and conclusions.

**IRB Approval** ☒ **HIPAA Compliance** ☒

**Mentor(s)** Melissa Walls, PhD, Timothy Stratton, PharmD, Ruth Westra, DO, MPH and Ray Christensen, MD

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